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A Comparison of Perceived Employee Satisfaction with Downward Communication within Department Stores in Cities of Varying Size

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A COMPARISON OF PERCEIVED EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION
WITH DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT
STORES IN CITIES OF VARYING SIZE

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Communication

Western Kentucky University

Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Karen Wassom Attig

May 1981

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A COMPARISON OF PERCEIVED EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION
WITH DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT
STORES IN CITIES OF VARYING SIZE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This writer wishes to acknowledge the people who contributed to the completion of this thesis.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Evan Rudolph, committee chairman, for his hours of encouragement, professional advice and counsel during this research endeavor.

I also wish to thank Dr. Carley Dodd, committee member, for his guidance in the statistical analyses vital to this study.

I recognize with gratitude the suggestions and contributions offered by committee member, Dr. J. Regis O'Conner, throughout this research project.

Special thanks are extended to the department store managers who allowed their employees to participate and to the employees whose cooperation provided the data so necessary for this research.

Much love is due to my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Earl Wassom, for their encouragement and assistance during my education endeavors.

Much love and appreciation are due my husband, D. Wendal, for his supportiveness when we were faced with geographical separation resulting from his career growth and my educational objectives. Thanks go to him for

encouraging my completion of all necessary coursework for obtainment of my degree before joining him in Tulsa, Oklahoma. His encouragement, love and genuine interest in my personal achievement could never be replaced.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER	Page
I. INTRODUCTION, REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RATIONALE.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose.....	1
Importance of Study.....	1
Definition of Terms.....	2
Scope of Study.....	4
Review of Literature.....	5
Overview of Downward Communication.....	6
Communication Problems in Management.....	7
Need for Effective Communication..	10
Supervisory Communication and Employee Morale in Department Stores.....	22
Job Satisfaction and Propensity to Leave.....	27
Summary.....	28
Rationale and Hypotheses.....	29
Hypotheses Tested.....	30
II. METHODOLOGY.....	32
Subjects.....	32
Procurement of Data.....	33
Pilot Study.....	33
Revision of Questionnaire.....	34
Research Variables.....	34
Independent Variable.....	34
Dependent Variables.....	35

Administration of Questionnaire.....	35
Treatment of Data.....	36
Summary.....	36
III. RESULTS.....	38
Communication Channels Utilized.....	38
Communication Satisfaction.....	38
Manager Communication Level and Store Size.....	41
Manager Speech Level, Length of Employment and Store Size.....	41
Managerial Communication Sufficiency.....	43
Managerial Communication Sufficiency and Store Size.....	43
Managerial Communication Sufficiency and Employee Age.....	43
Managerial Communication Sufficiency and Length of Employment and Store Size.....	46
Managerial Communication Sufficiency With Procedural Information.....	46
Managerial Communication Sufficiency With Procedural Information, Store Size and Length of Employment.....	49
Managerial Communication Sufficiency With Procedural Information, Store Size, Age and Length of Employment.....	49
Managerial Communication Sufficiency With Procedural Information and Store Size.....	49
Managerial Communication Sufficiency With Procedural Information with Employee Age.....	53
Managerial Communication Sufficiency With Procedural Information with Length of Employment.....	53
Managerial Communication Time with Store Size, Age, and Length of Employment.....	56
Managerial Communication Time with Store Size.....	56
Managerial Communication Time with Length of Employment.....	56
Effective Managerial Communication of Company Procedure.....	61
Effective Managerial Communication of Company Procedure with Store Size.....	61

Effective Managerial Communication of Company Procedure with Employee Age.....	65
Effective Managerial Communication of Company Procedure with Employee Age and Length of Employment.....	65
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Correcting Employees.....	65
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Correcting Employees with Store Size.....	68
Managerial Communication Effectiveness in Store Meetings.....	68
Managerial Communication Effectiveness in Store Meetings With Store Size.....	71
Managerial Communication Effectiveness in Store Meetings With Store Size and Length of Employment.....	71
Managerial Communication Effectiveness in Store Meetings With Employee Age and Length of Employment.....	71
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Instructing Employees.....	76
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Instructing Employees With Store Size.....	76
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Instructing Employees With Employee Age.....	79
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Instructing Employees With Length of Employment.....	79
Managerial Communication Effectiveness When Instructing Employees With Store Size and Length of Employment.....	79
IV. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS.....	81
Limitations.....	86
Considerations for Future Research.....	87
Conclusion.....	88
V. APPENDIX.....	89
VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	94

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1	Chi-square analysis of communication channels utilized in department stores of varying size.....	39
2	Analysis of variance of managerial speech level with age, store size, length of employment and store size by length of employment.....	40
3	Mean comparisons of manager talking on employee level and store size.....	42
4	Mean comparisons on manager talking on employee level with length of employment and store size.....	42
5	Analysis of variance of managerial communication sufficiency, store size, age and length of employment.....	44
6	Mean comparisons on managerial communication sufficiency and store size.....	45
7	Mean comparisons on managerial communication sufficiency and employee age.....	45
8	Mean comparisons on managerial communication sufficiency with length of employment and store size.....	47
9	Analysis of variance of managerial sufficiency in communicating procedural information, store size and length of employment.....	48
10	Mean comparisons on managerial communication knowledge with store size.....	50
11	Mean comparisons on managerial communication knowledge with length of employment.....	50

12	Analysis of variance of managerial information communication, store size, age, and length of employment.....	51
13	Mean comparisons with employee satisfaction of managerial information flow with store size.....	52
14	Mean comparisons with employee satisfaction of information flow with employee age.....	54
15	Mean comparisons with employee satisfaction of information flow with length of employment.....	55
16	Mean comparisons on employee attitudes toward information flow, store size and length of employment.....	55
17	Analysis of variance of managerial communication time, store size, length of employment, store size with length of employment, store size/age/length of employment.....	57
18	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward amount of time conversing with manager and size of store.....	58
19	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward time spent conversing with manager and length of employment.....	58
20	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward amount of time conversing with manager and store size with length of employment.....	60
21	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward amount of time conversing with manager and store size, length of employment and age.....	62
22	Analysis of variance of management communication effectiveness when expressing company procedure with store size, age and length of employment with age.....	63

23	Mean comparisons of managers' ability to express company procedure effectively and store size.....	64
24	Mean comparisons on managers' effective communication of company procedure with employee age.....	64
25	Mean comparisons on managers' effective communication of company procedure with employee age and length of employment.....	66
26	Analysis of variance of manager communication effectiveness when correcting employees with store size, age and length of employment.....	67
27	Mean comparisons of managerial effective communication when instructing employees with store size.....	69
28	Mean comparisons of manager effective communication when correcting employees with store size and length of employment...	70
29	Analysis of variance of managers' communication effectiveness when conducting store meetings with store size, age and length of employment.....	72
30	Mean comparisons on manager communication when conducting store meetings with store size.....	73
31	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when conducting store meetings with store size and length of employment.....	74
32	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when conducting store meetings with age and length of employment.....	75
33	Analysis of variance of manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with age, store size, length of employment and store size with length of employment.....	77
34	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with store size.....	78

12	Analysis of variance of managerial information communication, store size, age, and length of employment.....	51
13	Mean comparisons with employee satisfaction of managerial information flow with store size.....	52
14	Mean comparisons with employee satisfaction of information flow with employee age.....	54
15	Mean comparisons with employee satisfaction of information flow with length of employment.....	55
16	Mean comparisons on employee attitudes toward information flow, store size and length of employment.....	55
17	Analysis of variance of managerial communication time, store size, length of employment, store size with length of employment, store size/age/length of employment.....	57
18	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward amount of time conversing with manager and size of store.....	58
19	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward time spent conversing with manager and length of employment.....	58
20	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward amount of time conversing with manager and store size with length of employment.....	60
21	Mean comparisons of employee attitudes toward amount of time conversing with manager and store size, length of employment and age.....	62
22	Analysis of variance of management communication effectiveness when expressing company procedure with store size, age and length of employment with age.....	63

23	Mean comparisons of managers' ability to express company procedure effectively and store size.....	64
24	Mean comparisons on managers' effective communication of company procedure with employee age.....	64
25	Mean comparisons on managers' effective communication of company procedure with employee age and length of employment.....	66
26	Analysis of variance of manager communication effectiveness when correcting employees with store size, age and length of employment.....	67
27	Mean comparisons of managerial effective communication when instructing employees with store size.....	69
28	Mean comparisons of manager effective communication when correcting employees with store size and length of employment...	70
29	Analysis of variance of managers' communication effectiveness when conducting store meetings with store size, age and length of employment.....	72
30	Mean comparisons on manager communication when conducting store meetings with store size.....	73
31	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when conducting store meetings with store size and length of employment.....	74
32	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when conducting store meetings with age and length of employment.....	75
33	Analysis of variance of manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with age, store size, length of employment and store size with length of employment.....	77
34	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with store size.....	78

35	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with employee age.....	78
36	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with length of employment.....	80
37	Mean comparisons on manager communication effectiveness when instructing employees with length of employment with store size..	80

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DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT STORES
IN CITIES OF VARYING SIZE

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May 1981

96 Pages

Directed by: Evan Rudolph, Carley Dodd, J. Regis O'Connor

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Three retail department stores of varying size were compared to determine if store size affected employee attitudes toward downward communication. Chi-square and multivariate analyses were used to determine results based on a questionnaire administered to employees within three department stores. Employees within the small department store were found to be less satisfied with the communication received from their store manager than were employees in the medium size and large department stores. Employees within the large department store were found to be more satisfied with downward communication than subjects from the other stores.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION, REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RATIONALE

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine perceived employee satisfaction with downward communication in selected retail department stores. The study analyzed employee attitudes to determine their satisfaction with the amount and availability of communication within the retail department store where they were employed and to analyze the communication channels utilized. A comparison was made between downward communication in three department stores, one in each of three different size communities.

Importance of Study

The need for this study is exemplified by the findings of communication researchers indicating that an organization's effectiveness is dependent upon effective communication from management to employee. Research conducted in controlled settings and industrial organizations alike indicates that the amount and content of communication within organizations affect such factors as morale,

job satisfaction, turnover rate and productivity. Previous research in organizational communication indicates that communication satisfaction is greatest in small organizations. This research will compare employee attitudes to determine their satisfaction with communication.

W. Charles Redding acknowledged the need for additional field research in the area of communication by saying, "I think we need to attack our problems by parallel strategies, one in the strictly controlled laboratory...; the other in the "field"."¹ The majority of field research undertaken was conducted in industrial organizations. However, only a minimal amount of field research has dealt with communication specifically in retail department stores. A field study in retail department stores should elicit interest in further research concerning communication needs in regard to employee satisfaction with communication in retail department stores. This study should also provide a comparison of how store size affects employee communication satisfaction in retail department stores.

Definition of Terms

This writer has defined the following terms according to their intended meaning in this study.

¹W. Charles Redding, "The Empirical Study of Human Communication in Business and Industry," Syracuse University Research Symposium (1965): 51.

Downward Communication

Downward communication as defined for the purpose of this study is oral and/or written communication from superior to subordinate.

Management

The term management is used to refer to the store manager.

Employee

An employee is a person working in the department store excluding the manager and assistant manager.

Oral Communication

Oral communication is the transfer of messages through verbal means. Word-of-mouth, public address systems and conferences are examples of oral communication.

Written Communication

Written communication is the transfer of messages through the use of a printed media. Examples of written communication are memos, newsletters, and bulletin boards.

Employee Satisfaction With Communication

This is a term used to indicate satisfaction as determined by a questionnaire measuring communication availability and employee attitudes toward it.

Scope of Study

This research made use of two primary means of analyzing retail department store communication:

- (1) literature review and (2) field study.

Literature Review

Studies emphasizing downward and organizational communication, management procedures and employee job satisfaction were reviewed. These studies were used to provide insight into research previously rendered and the availability of research in retail department store communication.

Field Study

A field study was conducted within one retail department store in each of three different size communities. The three different stores were utilized in order to provide comparisons between store size, employee communication satisfaction, and communication channels used. The three stores chosen were owned by the same franchise, thus limiting the possibility that managerial training differences would affect the results. In an attempt to control cultural or environmental differences, the retail department stores were selected from within a sixty mile area.

A questionnaire was administered to all employees in each of the three stores to determine their satisfaction

with downward communication and to determine the communication channels used within each store. The responses were tabulated and comparisons made to determine "employee satisfaction with downward communication."

Organization of the Remainder of the Thesis

The remainder of this study is organized under four chapter headings: Chapter II, Methodology; Chapter III, Results; Chapter IV, Conclusions.

Review of Literature

Research findings are readily available which indicate that employee satisfaction with the amount and content of communication within manufacturing organizations can effect the morale, job satisfaction, turnover rate, and productivity of employees. Communication satisfaction among employees in department stores has been investigated by relatively few communication researchers. The purpose of this research study was to determine the perceived satisfaction of selected retail department store employees with the amount and availability of downward communication within their work environment.

The first section of the review of literature contains an overview of downward communication within organizations. Its purpose was to define and discuss downward

communication based upon studies of communication in industrial organizations.

The second section of the review of literature cites studies concerning supervisory communication and employee moral in department stores.

The final section of the review of literature examines the role of management in employee retention.

Overview of Downward Communication

Communication and industrial researchers have studied extensively the effectiveness of downward communication in industry. Bormann, Britt and Boyd, Harwell, Cort, Dahle, Hasch, and Koehler have all studied and analyzed downward communication within industrial organizations.¹ However, very little research has been conducted dealing specifically with communication channels in retail department stores. Researchers seem to agree that communication effectiveness in industry does affect

¹Ernest G. Bormann and others, Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969); Stewart H. Britt and Harper W. Boyd, Jr., Marketing Management and Administrative Action, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1973); Edward M. Harwell, Personnel Management and Training, (New York: Chain Store Age Books, 1975); Robert P. Cort, Communicating with Employees, (Waterford, Conn.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963); Thomas L. Dahle, "An Objective and Comparative Study of 5 Methods of Transmitting Information to Business and Industrial Employees," Speech Monographs (March 1954): 21-28; Jack J. Hash, "Your Voice Can Save You Time and Money," Today's Speech (September 1962): 12-13; Jerry W. Koehler, Organizational Communication Behavioral Perspectives (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976).

employee production and satisfaction. This portion of the review of literature deals specifically with what communication researchers have learned about downward communication within manufacturing environments. Of primary concern in this overview of downward communication are (1) Communication Problems in Management and (2) Improving Communication.

Communication Problems in Management

Previous research indicates that effective communication from management to employee increases productivity and satisfaction. Due to the necessity of effective managerial communication, researchers have addressed concern for communications problems in organizations. Communication problems in management will be recognized in this study of downward communication. Leyton defined the causes of poor communication in organizations as being (1) feelings of inferiority among employees, (2) increased size of the organization and (3) increased complexity of the work load. He also found that the usage of technical language contributes to the communication problem in market management.²

Buening found that talking too much, making generalized statements, being excessively firm and talking down to

² A. Leyton, The Art of Communication: Communicating in Industry (London: Sir Issac Pitman and Sons Ltd., 1968), p. 54.

people are problems cited in regard to language usage by management.³ He also noted ten further communication deficiencies: (1) lack of intermanagerial communication relating to matters of common interest and concern, (2) insufficient inter-departmental communication for the full understanding or coordination of activity, (3) little sense of unity felt by employees, (4) people are not seeing supervisors as often as they would like to, (5) insufficient information is reaching employees, (6) a need for more contact between the board of directors and management, (7) lack of reaction by management to employee recommendations, (8) improper induction of new employees, (9) committees are not effective and (10) there are no clear definitions of the range of authority and responsibilities of individuals.⁴

Wilson believed that providing feedback to subordinates is one of management's most important responsibilities. He believed that both positive and negative feedback aid employees in developing their abilities. Positive feedback, as defined by Wilson, tells the employee what he is doing well and provides reinforcement and

³ Charles R. Buening, Communicating on the Job: A Practical Guide for Supervisors (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1974), p. 30.

⁴ *Ib.a.*

motivation. He stated that negative feedback should serve to aid the employee in identifying and improving areas in which he is weak. Wilson listed the following three necessities for the effective use of negative feedback:

- 1) The employee must understand what you are saying.
- 2) The employee must be able to accept the information.
- 3) He or she must be able to do something about it.⁵

Diller, a communications researcher, studied oral communication in industry. He found three primary problem areas managers face in conference meetings. They are: (1) groups are too large, (2) group make-up is inappropriate and (3) communication is one-way.⁶ He also indicated that deficiencies in performance of the speaker are major problems exemplified in conferences.⁷ Diller also stressed the need for a speaker to exemplify sincerity and a well-defined attitude.⁸

Buening pointed out that management may also inhibit employee communication by asking loaded questions and emphasizing the point of blame.⁹ He also suggested that

⁵Thomas Be. Silsen, "Making Negative Feedback Work," Personnel Journal (December 1978): 680.

⁶N. Richard Diller, "Oral Communication in Industry," Today's Speech (September 1954): 24.

⁷Ibid, p. 25.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Buening, p. 32.

organizations suffer due to the lack of listening skills of management and employees.¹⁰

Faults in the agenda or vagueness in discussing the issue at hand were primary problems in business meetings analyzed by Crocker.¹¹ He listed these additional barriers to downward communication: (1) personality conflicts, (2) administering punishment through sarcasm, (3) misunderstandings and (4) improper timing of communication endeavors.¹²

In summary, a primary problem with industrial management is that employees do not receive enough information from superiors. If employee understanding is to be enhanced, communication needs to be well-defined and clear.

Improving communication within the organization can produce positive results ranging from increased cooperation to improved customer relations. At this time the actual need for improving communication will be discussed.

Need for Effective Communication

Mr. L. R. Boulware, former Vice-President for Employee Relations with General Electric Company, believed that

¹⁰Ibid., p. 45.

¹¹Lionel Crocker, "The Employer as a Communicator," Journal of Communication (Winter 1956): 162.

¹²Ibid., p. 162-164.

effective communication within an organization is necessary for the proper functioning of it. He states:

The establishment and maintenance of this man-to-man relationship between employees and supervisor, the correlation of the physical and emotional properties of the job, the improvement in supervisory leadership, the correction directly by his supervisor of misinformation in the mind of the employee - these make up our most important problem, our greatest opportunity. This is where fully 95% of our thought and effort is concentrated.¹³

Management analysts and practitioners acknowledge the communication problems evident within organizations and stress the need for effective communication.

Ray Foltz, a management researcher, also places much emphasis upon the needs of an organization to administer proper and effective communication skills. Foltz believes:

The success of the enterprise depends upon how well its objectives and goals are understood and how well that understanding is related to the needs of the marketplace. Effective communication, therefore, relates directly to the organizations potential for growth and its need for survival.¹⁴

Foltz also believes that management can elicit more prompt and efficient responses from employees if he shows them that he cares by telling them "why" before administering the

¹³David C. Phillips, "Oral Communications in Industry," Today's Speech (November 1956): 3-4.

¹⁴Ray Foltz, Management by Communication (Radnor, Pennsylvania: Chilton Book Co., 1975), p. 69.

"what" of company changes.¹⁵

Irving Shapiro, former Chairman of the Board of DuPont believes that

As a minimum, people in an organization should know where the organization is headed, why it has chosen to go that way, and what their personal role in the new mission is to be. Their feelings about these three matters must be solicited and considered. They must have the opportunity to contribute to policy formulation, even though the eventual final decisions still rest with management. But their sense of participation and their support is vital.¹⁶

Tribble cites that communication can be improved through encouraging participation by keeping employees informed. Cooperation was said by Tribble to be enhanced when management informs employees how they are doing, solicites suggestions and is willing to listen to and discuss both negative and positive aspects of the business.¹⁷

Cangemi and Claypool, consultants, recognize a frequent complaint of employees as "The only time my supervisor talks with me about performance is when I do something wrong:" They suggest, based upon this complaint, that management "should spend more time complimenting the

¹⁵

Roy G. Foltz, "Credibility: its erosion," Personnel Administrator (September 1976): 17.

¹⁶

Foltz, "Credibility: its erosion," p. 16.

¹⁷

O. Hoyt Tribble, "Speech and the Will to Work," Today's Speech (November 1954): 6.

abilities and successes of employees and trying to establish a climate of respect, concern, trust and appreciation."¹⁸

Studies cited by Simons indicate a considerable correlation between effective communication and job success-satisfaction.¹⁹

Tribble also found that job attitudes change positively when employees are given the right to think, the opportunity to express their thoughts and when they can see evidence that the decision-making process gave consideration to their thoughts.²⁰

Zelko suggests that effective communication is necessary for establishing positive customer relations. He also believes that a healthy internal climate can exceed the limits of management-employee relationships to the customer.²¹

Daley and Falcione learned that employees who are

¹⁸

Joseph P. Cangemi and Jeffrey C. Claypool, "Complimentary Interviews: A System for Rewarding Outstanding Employees," Personnel Journal (February 1978): 87.

¹⁹Herbert W. Simons, "Testing Speech Principles in Organizational Settings," Today's Speech (September 1966): 23.

²⁰Tribble, p. 6.

²¹Harold P. Zelko, Management-Employee Communication in Action (Cleveland: Howard Allen Inc., 1957), p. 27.

allowed the chance to discuss and formulate organizational decisions relevant to them perform significantly higher than those not given that opportunity.²²

Kirkpatrick, management consultant, asked the following questions to managers at all levels in various organizations. How good are communications in your organization? How good are communications in your department? He found that on a five point scale where 5 = excellent, 4 = very good, 3 = good, 2 = fair, 1 = poor, the communication within the organization was rated 2.5-3.0 and communication within the department was rated 3.0-3.4.²³ Kirkpatrick listed the following problems experienced due to ineffective communication.

Mistakes are made because people misunderstand the instructions from their boss. This results in the following:

- a. Things have to be done over.
- b. Schedules are not met.
- c. Costs increase because of scrap.
- d. Accidents occur.
- e. Workers are corrected and criticized because of mistakes and resentment occurs.
- f. Bosses are unhappy with the incompetence or carelessness of subordinates.
- g. Customers are unhappy because of poor quality or late deliveries.

²² John A. Daley and Raymond L. Falcione, "Communication Apprehension, Supervisor Communication Receptivity and Satisfaction with Supervisor," paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Philadelphia, Penn. (March 1976): 3.

²³ Donald L. Kirkpatrick, "Communications: everybody talks about it, but...", Personnel Administrator (January 1978): 46.

Duplication of effort takes place because two or more people thought they were supposed to do something. Things don't get done because people didn't know they were supposed to do them.²⁴

Kirkpatrick also found that among supervisors and middle-level managers low morale results from ineffective communications.²⁵

Weiss believes that supervisors who receive the most wholehearted support from their workers, and who can motivate the workers to do more than the minimum and produce better quality products are those who make themselves available to "workers and listen."²⁶ Research conducted by Weiss has indicated that messages are immediately forgotten fifty percent of the time.²⁷ A necessity for effective communication within the organization was believed by Weiss to be the development of listening skills. He noted seven steps which may be taken to improve these skills: (1) the individual must be ready to listen and must clear his mind of other things, (2) the person must avoid distractions, (3) bias or prejudice must be eliminated, (4) the listener must think about what the speaker

²⁴ Ibid., p. 47.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ W. H. Weiss, The Art and Skill of Managing People (West Nyack, N. Y.: Parker Publishing Company, 1975), p. 403.

²⁷ Ibid.

is saying, the meaning of his words and what he will say next, (5) listen for the speaker's ideas and reasons for them, (6) the listener should separate the advantages and disadvantages of the message and (7) the listener should look for the speaker's key words.²⁸

Weiss also emphasized the need for management to learn how best to express messages, suggesting that ideas be presented in such a way that the listener can relate to them and can make them his own goals.²⁹

Management must realize the need to give effective instructions. Weiss cited three major problem areas management faces in regard to instructing employees. These areas include preparation, instruction, and follow-up. Preparation is the time when management must decide how best to do the job, when and where it must be implemented and who is responsible for getting it done.³⁰ Crocker further elaborated by stating that the manager must know what is going to be said, must believe in it, and must make proper preparations for the session.³¹ The manager

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid., p. 405.

³⁰Ibid., p. 348.

³¹Crocker, p. 26.

must compile all of the facts about the job and study them thoroughly to achieve highest understandability by employees and be aware of their prior knowledge of the matter. To insure ultimate understanding Weiss believed the manager should use simple words, short sentences and should pause to allow employees time to absorb the information.³² This approach seems to be the most important aspect of effective communication from management to employee. Weiss discovered that instruction takes place best when the employer is aware of various speech techniques which affect the impact of his message. He found that tone of voice, tact, temperament, and a definitive optimistic attitude are all important to the effectiveness and understandability of instructions.³³

Weiss also suggested that the manager must proceed with some form of follow-up, after preparation and instruction, to show interest in progress made by employees and thus bolstering company morale.³⁴

Diller indicated that management must clearly define benefits which will result from a policy change within the company and should encourage the expression of opinions and ideas from employees. He believed managers

³²Weiss, p. 349.

³³Ibid., p. 6E.

³⁴Weiss, p. 77-79.

should devote themselves totally to the issue and present it with the utmost expression of vitality.³⁵

King, a lecturer on organizational communication, emphasizes three components of communication climate: the quantity of information, the quality of information and the channels available to the receiver.³⁶ He found that "in most organizations the people who are happiest with the communication climate are those who have access to many channels, while the people who are unhappiest are those who have access to very few."³⁷

Understanding the various aspects and two channels of communication can be beneficial to management.

Zelko emphasized the need for management to understand all aspects of the communication process. He believed the two types of communication, oral and written, should be used to their fullest advantage. Written communication was said by him to serve primarily to establish uniformity and permanence.³⁸ Oral communication, as determined by Zelko, is advantageous as it provides opportunities for others to seek further understanding through question-

³⁵Diller, p. 26.

³⁶Corwin P. King, "The Time to Be Concerned is When Communications Are Free and Open," Personnel Journal (April 1978): 205.

³⁷Ibid., p. 206.

³⁸Zelko, p. 26.

asking sessions.³⁹

Koehler found that the most effective communication takes place when both oral and written channels are implemented.⁴⁰

Yoder indicated that oral communication involves such forms as personal instructions, conference meetings, interviews, phone or public address messages, rumors and grapevine.⁴¹

The Industrial Relations Section of the California Institute of Technology reports that employees want more group meetings and other forms of verbal communication.⁴²

The National Conference Board for hourly paid employees found that bulletin boards are the primary means of written communication with 98.5 percent of all businesses surveyed making use of them.⁴³

Written communication as defined by Yoder includes letters, bulletin boards, manuals, annual reports and union publications.⁴⁴

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Koehler, p. 204.

⁴¹ Dale Yoder, Personnel Management and Industrial Relations (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, inc., 1956), p. 780.

⁴² Ibid., p. 781.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 782.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 780.

Weiss found that public address systems are the least effective of all communication systems used in businesses.⁴⁵

Ray Foltz conducted a survey of 151 organizations to determine the communication practices of those companies. He found that 87 percent of the participants communicated organizational plans and objectives to employees through the use of memos, employee publications and small group meetings. Ninety-seven percent favored the print medium in communicating company news. Seventy percent of participants said they did not utilize "formal written objectives for internal communications."⁴⁶

The previously mentioned research indicates that effective communication within business is a necessity. Job attitudes, productivity, and customer relations are directly associated with the communication taking place among the organization's employees.

Senior management must plan and coordinate a systematic communication program. Supervisory management must wholeheartedly believe in the need for communication within the business so that it can be implemented to the

⁴⁵Weiss, p. 780.

⁴⁶Roy G. Foltz, "Internal Communications Survey Results", Public Relations Journal (March 1979): 2.

fullest benefit of the company. Upon acceptance and implementation, management must constantly seek to improve the downward channels of communication so that company morale and production can reach optimum levels. Management must learn to develop listening skills, express messages more clearly, and give effective instructions. Performance of the speaker can affect the impact of the message. Communication attempts are more effective when the benefits of organizational changes are clearly understood by employees.

Oral and written communication combined is the most effective means of transferring messages. Management must learn to utilize both the oral and written channels to their fullest advantage.

This overview has included research related to downward communication in industry. The studies mentioned indicated that industrial employees experienced greater job satisfaction and produced more when the communication channels were fully utilized. Communications in industrial settings were found to be most effective when both the oral and written channels were used. Also noted is that employees in industrial firms want more group meetings and other forms of verbal communication. This portion of the review of literature dealt specifically with downward communication in industry.

Communication research in retail department stores will now be discussed.

Supervisory Communication and Employee
Morale in Department Stores

Previously mentioned studies have indicated that the supervisor's ability to communicate effectively has correlation to the organization's efficiency. (See Footnote #2) Organizations are made up of a variety of individuals who have communication needs. This portion of the review of literature reviews, in general, the morale needs of employees in correlation with supervisory communication channels. Of specific interest to this study are (1) supervisory communication and (2) communication climate.

Supervisory Communication

Supervisory communication patterns and employee morale have been studied in depth by industrial researchers in the manufacturing context. For example, see Zelko, Tribble, Leyton, Bormann, Crocker, and Freshley.⁴⁷ Research

⁴⁷Harold P. Zelko, Management-Employee Communication in Action, (Cleveland: Howard Allen Inc., 1957); O. Hoyt Tribble, "Speech and the Will to Work," Today's Speech, (September 1966): 23.; A. Leyton, The Art of Communication: Communicating in Industry, (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd., 1968); Ernest G. Bormann and others, Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1969); Lionel Crocker, "The Employer as a Communicator," Journal of Communication

which has been conducted in department stores and retailing organizations will be cited at this time to give further insight into the communication patterns of these organizations. It should be noted that very few studies have been conducted concerning communication satisfaction in department stores.

Baird and Bradley conducted a study to determine the correlation between communication and employee morale. A twenty-five item questionnaire was devised and distributed to one hundred-fifty workers from two medium size department stores. The survey had questions dealing with assessed communication content, communication style and assessment of relationships with supervisor. 'Content' items asked subordinates to rate the extent to which their supervisors told them what to do, solicited their input in decision making, gave them information about other organizational departments, or stressed happy interpersonal relationships. They also rated their supervisors' emphasis on teamwork, willingness to allow them to work unsupervised, encouragement of effort and his ability to reinforce good performance. 'Style' items requested that subordinates rate their perception of the supervisor's

(Winter 1956): 162; Dwight Freshley, "Thermometer for Industry's Communications Attitudes," Today's Speech (September 1960): 26-28.

concern for and comfortableness with them. They were to evaluate his level of attentiveness, listening, and usage of communication skills. The last five items rated the quality of the relationship with their immediate supervisor, the willingness of the employee to move to another department or work group and the extent to which they felt a part of their present work group. Analysis of the data indicated that the supervisors' content and style had a distinct impact upon employee morale. It was also found that an individual's relationship with his supervisor operated independently from his relationships with the work group.⁴⁸

Falcione observed devastating effects on employee satisfaction when supervisors did not take action after encouraging input from their subordinates.⁴⁹ Morale was negatively affected when salespeople were not clearly informed on matters such as the standards of performance they were expected to achieve and the relative importance of different goals of the organization.⁵⁰ Managerial

⁴⁸ John E. Baird and Patricia H. Bradley, "Communication Correlates of Employee Morale," Journal of Business Communication (Spring 1978): 54.

⁴⁹ Richard H. Hall, Organizations: Structure and Practice (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 9.

⁵⁰ William J. Stanton and R. H. Buskirk, Management of the Salesforce (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, 1974), p. 479.

communication which clarified job objectives was found to increase employee satisfaction.⁵¹

In summary, it was found that supervisory communication to department store employees has a direct impact on employee morale.

Communication Climate

Gracey discovered that self-imposed obstacles are often placed by management which deter effective communication thus inhibiting the development of pride and morale within the employee.⁵² If these obstacles are broken down the will to work can be promoted by keeping employees informed on intimate business matters.⁵³

Webb learned that supportiveness is a common determinant of the effectiveness of an organization. He suggested that a supportive organizational atmosphere can be achieved when managers continually work to improve the communication process. This continual awareness can result in renewed feelings of mutual trust and respect which

⁵¹J. Maher and D. Pierson, "Perceived Clarity of Individual Job Objectives and of Group Mission as Correlates of Organizational Morale," Journal of Communication (1970).

⁵²Harry F. Gracey, "Effective Communication-One Road to Productivity," Journal of Communication (1952): 15.

⁵³Tribble, p. 6.

are necessary for personal and professional satisfaction.⁵⁴

Research indicates that managerial communication practices contribute significantly to the morale and job satisfaction of employees. Employee satisfaction is quite often related to the frequency of communication employees experience with their superiors.⁵⁵ The amount of downward communication and the effectiveness of it can result in an increase in employee motivation and overall operation improvements.

In summary, it was found that supportiveness is a determinant of an organization's effectiveness. A supportive atmosphere is achieved when managers continually work to improve communication within the organization. It was also learned that the amount and effectiveness of downward communication can result in an increase in employee motivation and operational improvements.

In discussing employee satisfaction one must also determine how dissatisfaction and employee propensity to leave correlate. Does employee dissatisfaction, in fact,

⁵⁴ Ronald J. Webb, "Supportiveness-A Recurring Theme in Organizational Effectiveness," Michigan Business Review (July 1975): 18.

⁵⁵ J. Baird and J. Diebolt, "Role Congruence, Communication, Superior-Subordinate Relations, and Employee Satisfaction in Organizational Hierarchies," Western Speech Journal (1976): 265.

provide strong enough grounds for an employee to desire to resign his duties with the organization?

Job Satisfaction and Propensity to Leave

Research by Gracey and Webb indicated that employee dissatisfaction on the job can manifest itself in numerous ways.⁵⁶ One possible effect job dissatisfaction may have is that the employee wishes he could resign his position. Research cited in the following paragraphs examines the effect of employee dissatisfaction to his propensity to leave, not the actual resignation of his position.

Satisfaction and Willingness to Leave

A questionnaire administered by Donnelly and Etzel was used to measure job satisfaction, anxiety-stress, and employee propensity to leave among the retail sales staffs of sixteen stores. An analysis was made by categorizing each store into either a high or low sales volume then examining each questionnaire in the group context. Employees within the lower sales volume stores were found to have greater satisfaction with regard to pay, esteem, autonomy and self-actualization. They also had slightly more satisfaction in security and social needs and experienced

⁵⁶Gracey, p. 15; and Webb, p. 18.

less anxiety-stress and lower propensity to leave.⁵⁷

In summary, it was found that employees in lower sales volume department stores had greater satisfaction with their jobs and experienced lower propensity to leave than did employees in high sales volume department stores.

Working Conditions

Worker dissatisfaction as noted by Bradford is associated with rigid or lax work structures.⁵⁸ Working conditions in part or as a whole can determine the degree of satisfaction an employee will enjoy.⁵⁹ Employees dissatisfied with working conditions, the communication process, or anxiety-stress on the job are more likely to express a desire to leave that organization.

Summary

This chapter has provided a basis and framework from which to study retail department store communication.

⁵⁷ James H. Donnelly, Jr. and Michael J. Etzel, "Retail Store Performance and Job Satisfaction," Journal of Retailing (Summer 1977): 25.

⁵⁸ John Alan Bradford, "A General Perspective on Job Satisfaction: The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction, and Sociological and Psychological Variables," Dissertation, University of California, San Diego, 1976.

⁵⁹ Reed A. Harvey and Robert D. Smith, "Need Satisfaction in Retail Management: An Empirical Study," Journal of Retailing (Fall 1972): 89-95.

Downward communication in manufacturing environments has been discussed in relation to communication problems and the need for effective communication.

Communication in department stores was discussed. Research studies cited indicated that the supervisors' communication content and style have direct impact upon employee morale. Employee satisfaction was deterred when supervisors did not act upon employee input. Morale and job satisfaction are both related to managerial downward communication.

Rationale and Hypotheses

Industrial communication research indicates that a primary communication problem is employees who do not receive a satisfactory amount of communication from management. Communication in industrial settings was found to be most effective when both oral and written channels were used. Employees in industrial settings want to receive more verbal communication from their superiors. In industry these findings were verified. However, studies have not been administered to determine the relevance of the findings in industrial settings as compared to the retail department store.

The purpose of this study was to determine perceived employee satisfaction with downward communication

in selected retail department stores. The study analyzed employee attitudes to determine their satisfaction with the amount, and availability of communication within the retail department store where they were employed and also analysed the communication channels utilized. A comparison was made between downward communication in three department stores, one in each of three different size communities. Previous research in organizational communication indicates that communication satisfaction is greatest in small organizations. This study provides a comparison of how organization size affects employee communication satisfaction in retail department stores as compared to industrial settings.

Hypotheses Tested

The following four hypotheses were examined in this study.

H₁ - There will be a significant difference in employee communication satisfaction as related to size of store. Research indicates that the larger the organization the less contact employees have with their management. Lack of managerial contact tends to reduce the communication satisfaction experienced by the employee.

H₂ - There will be a significant difference in employee preference for oral or written communication among the different size stores. Industrial researchers have found that employees feel the need for more verbal

communication from management. However, research has not been administered to determine employee preferences in retail department stores.

H₃ - There will be a significant difference in size of store and number of communication channels utilized. Research administered in industrial settings indicated that employees prefer that oral and written communication channels be used to complement each other. However, research has not been administered within the retail department store to determine what communication channels are utilized within that workplace.

H₄ - There will be a significant difference in size of store and employee perceived effectiveness of downward communication. Research administered in industrial organizations suggests that organizational size affects the amount of contact the employee has with management. It is the belief of this researcher that communication effectiveness will be adversely affected by the lack of personal managerial contact with employees.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

This chapter identifies the subjects of this study, overviews the procurement of data, revision of questionnaire, and treatment of data used in determining employee satisfaction with downward communication and the number of communication channels used within selected retail department stores.

Subjects

The subjects of this field study were the employees of three retail department stores. An employee, as defined in Chapter I, page 3, is anyone working within the store excluding the manager and assistant manager. The retail department stores chosen were selected because (1) they were within the same franchise, assuring that management training would be similar among the three stores, (2) they were located within a sixty mile radius, assuring geographic similarity among the respondents, and (3) they were located in three communities with substantial population differences.

The smallest department store used in this study was located in Franklin, Kentucky. Thirty-four individuals

were employed in this 40,120 square foot store. The population of Franklin was 8,100.

The medium size department store used in this study was located in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Forty-one individuals were employed in this 60,000 square foot store. The population of Bowling Green was 38,529.

Nashville, Tennessee, population 448,000 was the location of the largest store used in this study. This store employed sixty individuals who worked in a 70,000 square foot building.

All of the employees in the three stores served as the sample. The sample consisted of 135 subjects. A questionnaire was administered to each subject which determined his/her satisfaction with downward communication in the store where he/she was employed.

Procurement of Data

Pilot Study

A questionnaire was developed and administered six months prior to this study to serve as a pilot study in determining employee satisfaction with downward communication in selected retail department stores. The questionnaire was administered to employees within retail department stores in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Upon analyzing the survey results, numerous weaknesses were observed:

(1) the use of technical language invalidated the study, (2) the questionnaire was too long, thus employees did not answer the entire survey, (3) management's opportunity to review the results may have affected employee willingness to be honest, (4) fill-in questions were often unanswered and (5) in tabulating the results it was found that the questionnaire did not determine employee satisfaction but rather the different channels of communication which were used within each department store.

Revision of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was revised taking into account the weaknesses of the pilot study. The number of items on the questionnaire was reduced in anticipation that employees would be more willing to answer it in its entirety if the instrument was more brief. Technical language was eliminated from the questionnaire. (See Appendix)

The questionnaire contained one independent variable and four dependent variables.

Research Variables

Independent Variable

The size of the store was the independent variable for this study. Three department stores of varying size

comprised the independent variable.

Dependent Variables

Four dependent variables emerged as the result of the questionnaire and were analyzed.

1) Communication satisfaction was determined by a scale of five items dealing with their manager's speech level, and the amount of communication and information received from their manager, items 2-6.

2) Employee communication preferences were measured by two items, numbers 7-8.

3) Utilization of communication channels was determined by question number 1 which asked employees which methods of communicating company policy and procedure were used by their manager.

4) Perceptions of communication effectiveness were measured by items numbered 9-13 on the questionnaire. These items measured perceptions of levels of managerial communication comprehension employees felt in store meetings, when instructed or corrected by their manager, and when he informed them of company procedures.

Administration of Questionnaire

One-hundred thirty-five questionnaires were distributed to the store managers for them to administer. Envelopes were attached to the questionnaire so employees

could be assured their responses would not be seen by their manager. A one week interval was allowed for the store managers to administer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered in the store's weekly staff meeting. The questionnaires were collected by the manager following the staff meeting; he observed any absentees and administered the questionnaire to them at another time. The questionnaires were then collected by the researcher at the end of a one week period.

Treatment of Data

Chi-square analysis was used for analyzing the items dealing with communication channels utilized and communication preferences. (Items 7, 8, and 1 on the questionnaire)

Numerous analyses of variance were utilized to determine communication satisfaction and communication effectiveness. (Items 9-13 on the questionnaire)

The alpha level was set at .05.

Summary

This chapter has specified the methodology used in the present study by discussing the subjects, procurement of data, revision of questionnaire, and treatment of data.

All employees within three different size retail department stores within the same franchise were subjects

for this study. A questionnaire was administered to determine employees' satisfaction with downward communication, employees' perceived effectiveness of downward communication, employee preferences of oral or written communication, and the communication channels utilized within retail department stores. Comparisons were made between the four dependent variables and the independent variable.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The first two chapters of this study include a review of literature and an explanation of the methodology utilized. This chapter analyzes the results obtained when determining how store size affects employee attitudes toward communication satisfaction, employee communication preferences and employee perceptions of communication effectiveness at a .05 level of significance. Chapter IV will include discussion and implications resulting from this study.

Communication Channels Utilized

The primary communication channels utilized within the department stores tested were personal communication (46%) and store meetings (54%). A chi-square analysis of communication channels utilized in department stores of varying size is shown in Table 1.

Communication Satisfaction

The results of a multivariate analysis indicating how employees responded to the statement, "My manager talks on my level," as cross-analyzed by age, length of employment and store size are shown in Table 2. The

TABLE 1
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION
CHANNELS UTILIZED IN DEPARTMENT
STORES OF VARYING SIZE

Store Size	Management Method		Row Total
	Conversation	Store Meetings	
Large	13	28	41
	31.7	68.3	47.1
	32.5	59.6	
	14.9	32.2	
Medium	10	14	24
	41.7	58.3	27.6
	25.0	29.8	
	11.5	16.1	
Small	17	5	22
	77.3	22.7	25.3
	42.5	10.6	
	19.5	5.7	
Column Total	40	47	87
	46.0	54.0	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 12.21 \text{ (p .002)}$$

Order of percentages per cell:

Count
Row
Column
Total

TABLE 2
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGERIAL SPEECH
LEVEL WITH AGE, STORE SIZE, LENGTH OF
EMPLOYMENT AND STORE SIZE BY LENGTH
OF EMPLOYMENT

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	18.942	4	4.736	6.781	0.000
Store	8.852	2	4.426	6.338	0.003
Age	3.447	1	3.447	4.936	0.029
Length Employment	3.253	1	3.253	4.657	0.034
2-Way Interactions	21.648	5	4.330	6.200	0.000
Store by Age	0.035	2	0.018	0.025	0.975
Store by Employment	19.292	2	9.646	13.812	0.000
Age by Employment	0.426	1	0.046	0.610	0.437
3-Way Interactions	0.992	2	0.496	0.710	0.494
Store, Age, Employment	0.992	2	0.496	0.710	0.494
Explained	41.583	11	3.780	5.413	0.000
Residual	61.456	88	0.698		
Total	103.039	99	1.041		

significant main effects indicate a difference between store size, age and length of employment. A significant interaction was found with manager speech level, length of employment and store size.

Manager Communication Level
and Store Size

According to the main effect from Table 2, Table 3 indicates that employees in the large department store felt their manager talked on their level ($\bar{x} = 4.0$) as compared to medium sized store employees ($\bar{x} = 3.57$) or employees in the small department store ($\bar{x} = 3.08$) who were in less agreement on this statement. Table 3 presents the mean comparisons of managers' speech level and store size.

Manager Speech Level, Length of
Employment and Store Size

As indicated in Table 2, store size and length of employment did affect employee perceptions of their manager's talking on their level. Table 4 shows that employees within the large department store who had been employed longer than one year agreed that the manager spoke on their level ($\bar{x} = 4.20$) as compared by those in the same store working less than one year ($\bar{x} = 3.60$). In contrast, those employed within the small department store for over one year disagreed with the idea that their manager spoke

TABLE 3
MEAN COMPARISONS OF MANAGER TALKING
ON EMPLOYEE LEVEL AND STORE SIZE*

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Talk Level</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	4.0 _a	45
Medium	3.57 _b	30
Small	3.08 _c	25

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .41)

TABLE 4
MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER TALKING
ON EMPLOYEE LEVEL WITH LENGTH OF
EMPLOYMENT AND STORE SIZE*

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Length of Employment</u>			
	1 year or less		over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	3.60 _a	15	4.20 _a	30
Medium	3.63 _a	16	3.50 _a	14
Small	4.33 _b	9	2.38 _c	16

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .41)

on their level ($\bar{x} = 2.38$) while those employed for less than one year felt he did communicate on their level ($\bar{x} = 4.33$).

Managerial Communication Sufficiency

Store, age, length of employment and the two-way interaction of store and length of employment all indicate significance when determining employee attitude toward managerial communication sufficiency. Table 5 shows the analysis of variance for communication sufficiency, store size, employee age and length of employment. The significant main effects indicate a difference between store size and employee age. A significant interaction was found with managerial communication sufficiency, length of employment and store size, see Table 8.

Managerial Communication Sufficiency and Store Size

According to the main effect in Table 5, Table 6 indicates that the large store employees believed that managerial communication was sufficient ($\bar{x} = 4.0$), but employees in both the medium ($\bar{x} = 3.37$) and small ($\bar{x} = 3.28$) stores disagreed.

Managerial Communication Sufficiency and Employee Age

According to the main effect in Table 5, Table 7

TABLE 5
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
SUFFICIENCY, STORE SIZE, AGE AND LENGTH OF
EMPLOYMENT

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	21.884	4	5.471	6.622	0.000
Store	5.078	2	2.539	3.073	0.051
Age	9.224	1	9.224	11.164	0.001
Lngh. Employment	4.215	1	4.215	5.101	0.026
2-Way Interactions	10.448	5	2.090	2.529	0.035
Store to Age	1.580	2	0.790	0.956	0.388
Store to Lngh. Emp.	8.935	2	4.467	5.407	0.006
Age to Lngh. Emp.	0.121	1	0.121	0.147	0.703
3-Way Interactions	2.268	2	1.134	1.373	0.259
Store to Age to Length of Employ.	2.268	2	1.134	1.373	0.259
Explained	34.600	11	3.145	3.807	0.000
Residual	72.709	88	0.826		
Total	107.309	99	1.084		

TABLE 6
 MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
 SUFFICIENCY AND STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Manager Communication Sufficiency</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	4.0 _a	45
Medium	3.37 _b	30
Small	3.28 _b	25

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

TABLE 7
 MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
 SUFFICIENCY AND EMPLOYEE AGE *

<u>Employee Age</u>	<u>Manager Communication Sufficiency</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
16 - 26 years	3.31 _a	55
27+ years	4.02 _b	45

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

indicates that employees twenty-seven years of age and older were satisfied with the amount of communication they received from their manager ($\bar{x} = 4.02$) while younger employees disagreed ($\bar{x} = 3.31$).

Managerial Communication Sufficiency,
Length of Employment and Store Size

A significant interaction was found with managerial communication sufficiency, length of employment and store size as indicated in Table 5. Table 8 shows the interaction observed in Table 5. The interaction with length of employment with store size revealed that employees working in the small store for one year or less felt their manager communicated to them enough ($\bar{x} = 4.22$), as opposed by employees working for longer than one year ($\bar{x} = 2.75$).

Managerial Communication Sufficiency
With Procedural Information

The significant main effects when determining employees perceptions regarding their manager's ability to communicate to them sufficiently for the to do their job well indicate a difference between store size, age and length of employment, as shown in Table 9.

TABLE 8
 MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
 SUFFICIENCY WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT AND
 STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Length of Employment</u>			
	1 year or less		over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	3.73 _a	15	4.13 _a	30
Medium	3.44 _a	16	3.29 _a	14
Small	4.22 _b	9	2.75 _c	16

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

TABLE 9
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGERIAL SUFFICIENCY
IN COMMUNICATING PROCEDURAL INFORMATION,
STORE SIZE AND LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	17.313	4	4.328	4.626	0.002
Store	11.938	2	5.969	6.379	0.003
Age	0.584	1	0.584	0.624	0.432
Lngh. Employment	3.649	1	3.649	3.899	0.051
2-Way Interactions	4.483	5	0.897	0.958	0.448
Store to Age	0.504	2	0.252	0.270	0.764
Store to Lngh. Emp.	3.668	2	1.834	1.960	0.147
Age to Lngh. Emp.	1.100	1	1.100	1.176	0.281
3-Way Interactions	2.614	2	1.307	1.397	0.253
Store to Age to Lngh. of Emp.	2.614	2	1.307	1.397	0.253
Explained	24.410	11	2.219	2.372	0.013
Residual	82.340	88	0.936		
Total	106.749	99	1.078		

Managerial Communication Sufficiency
With Procedural Information, Store
Size, and Length of Employment

According to the main effect from Table 9, Table 10 indicates that employees in the large department store felt their manager told them the things they needed to know in order to do their jobs well ($\bar{x} = 4.10$) as compared to employees in the medium size ($\bar{x} = 3.57$) or small ($\bar{x} = 3.68$) stores who were not satisfied in this regard.

Individuals employed one year or less felt their manager told them the things they needed to know in order to do their job well ($\bar{x} = 4.10$), yet those employed for longer lengths of time were in less agreement ($\bar{x} = 3.85$) as indicated in Table 11.

Managerial Communication Sufficiency With
Procedural Information, Store Size, Age,
and Length of Employment

The significant main effects when determining managerial communication sufficiency when relaying procedural information indicate a difference between store size, age and length of employment, as shown in Table 12.

Managerial Communication Sufficiency
With Procedural Information and
Store Size

According to the main effect from Table 12, Table 13 shows that employees in the large department store were satisfied with the amount of information

TABLE 10
 MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
 KNOWLEDGE WITH STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Managerial Communication Knowledge</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	4.36 _a	45
Medium	3.57 _b	30
Small	3.68 _b	25

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .47)

TABLE 11
 MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
 KNOWLEDGE WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

<u>Length of Employment</u>	<u>Managerial Communication Knowledge</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
1 year or less	4.10 _a	40
Over 1 year	3.85 _b	60

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .47)

TABLE 12
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGERIAL INFORMATION
COMMUNICATION, STORE SIZE, AGE, AND LENGTH
OF EMPLOYMENT

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	46.734	4	11.684	14.530	0.001
Store	27.988	2	13.994	17.404	0.001
Age	4.971	1	4.971	6.182	0.015
Lngh. Employment	3.848	1	3.848	4.786	0.031
2-Way Interactions	10.230	5	2.046	2.545	0.034
Store to Lngh. of Employment	10.119	2	5.059	6.292	0.003
Store to Age	0.485	2	0.242	0.302	0.740
Age to Length of Employment	0.581	1	0.581	0.723	0.398
3-Way Interactions	1.665	2	0.832	1.035	0.359
Store to Age to Lngh. of Emp.	1.665	2	0.832	1.035	0.359
Explained	58.629	11	5.330	6.629	0.001
Residual	70.760	88	0.804		
Total	129.389	99	1.307		

TABLE 13
MEAN COMPARISONS WITH EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION
OF MANAGERIAL INFORMATION FLOW WITH
STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Satisfaction of Information Flow</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	4.38 _a	45
Medium	3.27 _b	30
Small	2.96 _b	25

* Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .43)

received from their manager (\bar{x} = 4.38), employees in the medium (\bar{x} = 3.27) and small (\bar{x} = 2.96) department stores were less satisfied with the amount of information received from their managers.

Managerial Communication Sufficiency
With Procedural Information With
Employee Age

According to the main effect from Table 12, Table 14 shows that employees twenty-seven years of age and older were satisfied with the amount of information received from their manager (\bar{x} = 4.11), yet employees younger responded less positively toward this attitude (\bar{x} = 3.35).

Managerial Communication Sufficiency With
Procedural Information With Length of
Employment

According to the main effect from Table 13, Table 15 indicates that individuals employed within the department stores for one year or less were more satisfied with the amount of information received from their manager (\bar{x} = 3.77) than those employed for over one year (\bar{x} = 3.63).

The interaction between length of employment and store size revealed, in Table 16, that employees working in the small department store for one year or less felt they received enough information from their manager (\bar{x} = 3.89), whereas those in the same store employed for over one year did not feel they received adequate amounts

TABLE 14
MEAN COMPARISONS WITH EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION
OF INFORMATION FLOW WITH EMPLOYEE AGE *

Employee Age	Satisfaction of Information Flow	
	Mean Score	Count
16 - 26 years	3.35 _a	55
Over 26 years	4.11 _b	45

* Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .43)

TABLE 15
 MEAN COMPARISONS WITH EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION
 OF INFORMATION FLOW WITH LENGTH
 OF EMPLOYMENT *

Length of Employment	Information Flow Satisfaction	
	Mean Score	Count
1 year or less	3.77 _a	40
Over 1 year	3.63 _b	30

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .43)

TABLE 16
 MEAN COMPARISONS ON EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES TOWARD
 INFORMATION FLOW, STORE SIZE AND LENGTH
 OF EMPLOYMENT *

Store Size	Length of Employment			
	1 year or less		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	4.13 _a	15	4.50 _a	30
Medium	3.38 _b	16	3.14 _b	14
Small	3.89 _a	9	2.44 _c	16

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .43)

of information ($\bar{x} = 2.44$).

Managerial Communication Time With
Store Size, Age, and Length
of Employment

The significant main effects when determining managerial communication time indicate a difference between store size and length of employment. Significant interactions were found with managerial communication time, store size with length of employment and managerial communication time, store size, and age with length of employment. Table 17 shows the results of a multivariate analysis of these main and interactive effects.

Managerial Communication Time With
Store Size

According to the main effects from Table 17, Table 18 indicates that employees in the small department store were more satisfied with the amount of time they talked with their manager ($\bar{x} = 3.16$) than were those in the medium size store ($\bar{x} = 3.63$).

Managerial Communication Time With
Length of Employment

According to the main effects from Table 17, Table 19 indicates that those employed for over one year were not satisfied with the amount of time they spent talking with their manager ($\bar{x} = 3.57$) as compared to those

TABLE 17

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
 TIME, STORE SIZE, LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT,
 STORE SIZE WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT,
 STORE SIZE/AGE/LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	8.289	4	2.072	3.224	0.016
Store	4.317	2	2.159	3.359	0.039
Age	1.541	1	1.541	2.397	0.125
Lngh. Employ.	4.878	1	4.878	7.589	0.007
2-Way Interactions	9.258	5	1.852	2.881	0.019
Store to Age	2.644	2	1.322	2.057	0.134
Store to Lngh. Employment	5.221	2	2.611	4.062	0.021
Age to Lngh. Employment	1.011	1	1.011	1.573	0.213
3-Way Interactions	18.404	2	9.202	14.318	0.001
Store to Age to Lngh. Emp.	18.404	2	9.202	14.318	0.001
Explained	35.952	11	3.268	5.085	0.001
Residual	56.558	88	0.643		
Total	92.509	99	0.934		

(critical difference = .39)

TABLE 18
 MEAN COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES TOWARD
 AMOUNT OF TIME CONVERSING WITH MANAGER AND
 SIZE OF STORE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Communication Time With Manager</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	3.44 _{ab}	45
Medium	3.63 _a	30
Small	3.16 _b	25

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different (critical difference = .39).

TABLE 19
 MEAN COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES TOWARD
 TIME SPENT CONVERSING WITH MANAGER AND
 LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

<u>Length of Employment</u>	<u>Time Conversing with Manager</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
1 year or less	3.22 _a	40
Over 1 year	3.57 _b	60

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different (critical difference = .39).

employed for less than one year who expressed more satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 3.22$).

According to the significant interaction from Table 17, Table 20 indicates that employees who had worked in the small department store for one year or less were satisfied with the amount of time spent conversing with their manager ($\bar{x} = 2.33$), yet those employed for over one year expressed less satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 3.63$).

Employees within the large department store, employed one year or less, who were sixteen to twenty-six years of age, felt a need for more conversation with their manager ($\bar{x} = 4.2$), as compared with those within the same store, twenty-seven years of age and above, who were content with the amount of conversation with their manager ($\bar{x} = 2.0$). In the medium size department store employees in the older age group felt they needed more conversation time with their manager ($\bar{x} = 4.5$), with the younger employees expressing satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 3.36$). Small department store employees between the ages of sixteen to twenty-six did not feel a need for more conversation time ($\bar{x} = 2.0$), yet older employees felt such need ($\bar{x} = 3.0$). In contrast are figures for individuals employed over one year within the department stores. Employees sixteen to twenty-six years of age, in the large store, employed over one year were satisfied with the amount of conversation time spent

TABLE 20
 MEAN COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES TOWARD
 AMOUNT OF TIME CONVERSING WITH MANAGER AND
 STORE SIZE WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Store Size	Length of Employment			
	1 year or less		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	3.47 _a	15	3.43 _a	30
Medium	3.50 _a	16	3.70 _a	14
Small	2.33 _b	9	3.63 _a	16

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .39)

with their manager ($\bar{x} = 3.0$), yet older employees were less satisfied ($\bar{x} = 3.54$). Employees in the small department store, sixteen to twenty-six years of age, felt a need for more time with their manager ($\bar{x} = 3.75$), older employees in the same store expressed disagreement ($\bar{x} = 3.25$), as shown in Table 21.

Effective Managerial Communication
of Company Procedure

The significant main effects, Table 22, indicate a difference between effective managerial communication of company procedure, store size and age. Significant interactions were found regarding managerial communication effectiveness: (1) store size, (2) age, (3) length of employment with age and (4) managerial communication effectiveness with age and length of employment.

Effective Managerial Communication
of Company Procedure With
Store Size

As indicated in Table 22, Table 23 shows that when the store manager taught company procedure, employees in the large store felt they understood his communication ($\bar{x} = 4.80$), yet employees in the medium ($\bar{x} = 4.0$) and small ($\bar{x} = 3.64$) stores did not express such positive feelings toward comprehending what was said by their manager.

TABLE 21

MEAN COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES TOWARD
AMOUNT OF TIME CONVERSING WITH MANAGER AND
STORE SIZE, LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT WITH AGE *

1 Year or Less Employment				
<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Employee Age</u>			
	16 - 26 years		27+ years	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	4.20 _a	10	2.0 _e	5
Medium	3.36 _{bc}	14	4.50 _a	2
Small	2.0 _e	6	3.0 _b	3

Over 1 Year Employment				
<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Employee Age</u>			
	16 - 26 years		27+ years	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	3.0 _b	6	3.54 _{cd}	24
Medium	3.86 _{ad}	7	3.71 _d	7
Small	3.75 _d	12	3.25 _{bc}	4

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .39)

TABLE 22

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION
EFFECTIVENESS WHEN EXPRESSING COMPANY PROCEDURE
WITH STORE SIZE, AGE AND LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT
WITH AGE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	27.629	4	6.907	9.735	0.001
Store	15.830	2	7.915	11.155	0.001
Age	3.012	1	3.012	4.244	0.043
Lngh. Employment	0.004	1	0.004	0.006	0.938
2-Way Interactions	7.265	5	1.453	2.048	0.081
Store/Age	0.134	2	0.067	0.094	0.910
Store/Lngh. Emp.	3.515	2	1.757	2.477	0.090
Age/Lngh. Emp.	4.575	1	4.575	6.449	0.013
3-Way Interactions	0.795	2	0.398	0.560	0.573
Store/Age/Lngh. Employment	0.795	2	0.398	0.560	0.573
Explained	35.689	11	3.244	4.573	0.001
Residual	57.471	81	0.710		
Total	93.161	92	1.013		

(critical difference = .41)

TABLE 23

MEAN COMPARISONS OF MANAGERS' ABILITY TO EXPRESS
COMPANY PROCEDURE EFFECTIVELY WITH STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Manager Communicate Company Procedure</u>	
	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Count</u>
Large	4.80 _a	45
Medium	4.00 _b	23
Small	3.64 _b	25

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .41)

TABLE 24

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERS' EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
OF COMPANY PROCEDURE WITH EMPLOYEE AGE *

<u>Age</u>	<u>Manager Communication - Company Procedure</u>	
	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Count</u>
16 - 26 years	3.96 _a	50
27+ years	4.67 _b	43

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .41)

Effective Managerial Communication
of Company Procedure With
Employee Age

Table 24 indicates that employees over twenty-six years of age felt they understood when their manager expressed company procedure ($\bar{x} = 4.67$), employees younger did not express such a feeling of understanding ($\bar{x} = 3.96$).

Effective Managerial Communication of
Company Procedure With Employee Age
and Length of Employment

A significant interaction was found in Table 22. Table 25 indicates the correlation between employee age and perception of manager's effective communication of company procedure. This chart suggests that employees twenty-seven years of age and older, employed for one year or less, felt quite confident that they understood their manager's communication when he expressed company procedure ($\bar{x} = 4.89$), yet those in the same age group employed over one year felt slightly less confident in this regard ($\bar{x} = 4.62$).

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Correcting Employees

Table 26 indicates the variance of effective managerial communication when correcting employees with store size, age and length of employment. The significant main effects when determining managerial communication

TABLE 25

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGERS' EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
OF COMPANY PROCEDURE WITH EMPLOYEE AGE AND
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Age	Length of Employment			
	1 year or less		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
16 - 26 years	3.89 _a	27	4.04 _a	23
27+ years	4.89 _b	9	4.62 _b	34

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .41)

TABLE 26

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGER COMMUNICATION
EFFECTIVENESS WHEN CORRECTING EMPLOYEES WITH
STORE SIZE, AGE AND LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	18.614	4	4.653	5.006	0.001
Store	11.948	2	5.974	6.427	0.003
Age	1.247	1	1.247	1.341	0.250
Lngh. Employment	3.191	1	3.191	3.434	0.068
2-Way Inter- actions	10.580	5	2.116	2.277	0.055
Store/Age	1.530	2	0.765	0.823	0.443
Store/Lngh. Emp.	6.391	2	3.196	3.438	0.037
Age/Lngh. Emp.	1.689	1	1.689	1.817	0.181
3-Way Inter- actions	0.507	2	0.253	0.273	0.762
Store/Age/Lngh. Emp.	0.507	2	0.253	0.273	0.762
Explained	29.700	11	2.700	2.905	0.003
Residual	75.288	81	0.929		
Total	104.989	92	1.141		

*(critical difference = .47)

effectiveness when correcting employees indicate a difference between store size, age and length of employment. A significant interaction was found with managerial communication effectiveness, employee age and length of employment.

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Correcting Employees With
Store Size

According to the main effect from Table 26, Table 27 shows that employees in the large department store felt they understood when corrected by their manager ($\bar{x} = 4.76$) as compared to employees in the medium ($\bar{x} = 4.04$) and small ($\bar{x} = 3.88$) stores where employees indicate slight understanding.

The significant interaction from Table 26 is analyzed in Table 28. Table 28 indicates that employees in the small department store who have been employed for one year or less felt they understood when their manager corrected them ($\bar{x} = 4.67$). Employees in the small store, employed for over one year, indicated less understanding when they responded to the effectiveness of managerial communication when being corrected ($\bar{x} = 3.44$).

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
in Store Meetings

The significant main effects when determining

TABLE 27

MEAN COMPARISONS OF MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
WHEN INSTRUCTING EMPLOYEES WITH STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Effective Communication - Instruction</u>	
	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Count</u>
Large	4.76 _a	45
Medium	4.04 _b	23
Small	3.88 _b	25

* Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .47)

TABLE 28

MEAN COMPARISONS OF MANAGER EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
WHEN CORRECTING EMPLOYEES WITH STORE SIZE AND
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Store Size	Length of Employment			
	1 year or less		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	4.93 _a	14	4.68 _a	31
Medium	3.85 _{bc}	13	4.30 _b	10
Small	4.67 _a	9	3.44 _c	16

* Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .037)

managerial communication effectiveness in store meetings indicate a difference between store size, age and length of employment, as shown in Table 29. These areas of significance are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
in Store Meetings With Store Size

According to the main effect from Table 29, Table 30 indicates that employees in the large department store felt they understood their manager when he conducted store meetings ($\bar{x} = 4.69$), yet those in the small store indicated less understanding in this area ($\bar{x} = 3.84$).

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
in Store Meetings With Store Size
and Length of Employment

According to the main effect from Table 29, Table 31 suggests that employees in the small department store who have been employed one year or less felt they understood their manager's communication in store meetings ($\bar{x} = 4.67$), those employed over one year understood less ($\bar{x} = 3.38$).

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
in Store Meetings With Employee Age
and Length of Employment

A significant interaction identified in Table 26 is described in detail in Table 32. This table indicates

TABLE 29
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGERS' COMMUNICATION
EFFECTIVENESS WHEN CONDUCTING STORE MEETINGS
WITH STORE SIZE, AGE AND LENGTH
OF EMPLOYMENT

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	14.826	4	3.707	4.470	0.003
Store	10.021	2	5.011	6.043	0.004
Age	0.372	1	0.372	0.448	0.505
Length Employment	2.970	1	2.970	3.582	0.062
2-Way Interactions	11.237	5	2.247	2.711	0.026
Store/Age	0.872	2	0.436	0.526	0.593
Store/Lngth. Emp.	7.549	2	3.775	4.553	0.013
Age/Lngth. Emp.	3.126	1	3.126	3.770	0.056
3-Way Interactions	0.067	2	0.033	0.040	0.960
Store/Age/Lngth. Employment	0.067	2	0.033	0.040	0.960
Explained	26.130	11	2.375	2.865	0.003
Residual	67.159	81	0.829		
Total	93.290	92	1.014		

critical difference = .44

TABLE 30

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION
WHEN CONDUCTING STORE MEETINGS WITH
STORE SIZE *

<u>Store Size</u>	<u>Manager Communication Effectiveness</u>	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	4.69 _a	45
Medium	4.26 _{ab}	23
Small	3.84 _b	25

* Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .43)

TABLE 31

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN CONDUCTING STORE MEETINGS WITH STORE SIZE AND
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Store Size	Length of Employment			
	1 year and less		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	4.79 _a	14	4.65 _a	31
Medium	4.15 _b	13	4.40 _{ab}	10
Small	4.67 _a	9	3.38 _c	16

* Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

TABLE 32

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN CONDUCTING STORE MEETINGS WITH AGE AND
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT*

Age	Length of Employment			
	1 year and less		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
16 - 26 years	4.37 _a	27	4.09 _a	23
Over 26 years	5.00 _b	9	4.35 _a	34

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .43)

that employees twenty-seven years of age and older who have been employed in the department stores one year or less felt they understood their manager completely when he conducted store meetings ($\bar{x} = 5.0$), the same age group who were employed for longer than one year indicated understanding but not to such a great degree ($\bar{x} = 4.35$).

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Instructing Employees

The significant main effects when determining managerial communication effectiveness when instructing employees indicate a difference between age, store size and length of employment. Store size with length of employment was the significant interaction as indicated in Table 33.

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Instructing Employees With
Store Size

According to the main effect from Table 33, Table 34 shows that employees in the large department store felt they understood their manager completely ($\bar{x} = 4.96$), medium size store employees understood partially ($\bar{x} = 4.3$), and small store employees had further questions ($\bar{x} = 3.44$).

TABLE 33

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN INSTRUCTING EMPLOYEES WITH AGE, STORE SIZE,
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT AND STORE SIZE
WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	p of F
Main Effects	42.960	4	10.740	12.886	0.001
Store	26.796	2	13.398	16.075	0.001
Age	4.290	1	4.290	5.147	0.026
Length Employment	3.358	1	3.358	4.029	0.048
2-Way Interactions	10.807	5	2.161	2.593	0.032
Store/Age	2.078	2	1.039	1.246	0.293
Store/Length Emp.	8.597	2	4.299	5.158	0.008
Age/Length Emp.	0.776	1	0.776	0.930	0.338
3-Way Interactions	0.788	2	0.394	0.473	0.625
Store/Age/Length Employment	0.788	2	0.394	0.473	0.625
Explained	54.555	11	4.960	5.951	0.001
Residual	67.509	81	0.833		
Total	122.064	92	1.327		

critical difference = .44

TABLE 34

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN INSTRUCTING EMPLOYEES WITH STORE SIZE *

Store Size	Manager Communication Effectiveness	
	Mean Score	Count
Large	4.96 _a	45
Medium	4.30 _b	23
Small	3.44 _c	25

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

TABLE 35

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN INSTRUCTING EMPLOYEES WITH EMPLOYEE AGE *

Age	Manager Communication Effectiveness	
	Mean Score	Count
16-26 years	4.06 _a	50
27+ years	4.77 _b	43

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Instructing Employees With
Employee Age

A significant main effect in Table 33 is described in Table 35. Employees twenty-seven years of age and older felt they understood their manager when he gave them instructions ($\bar{x} = 4.77$), those under twenty-seven indicated slightly less levels of understanding ($\bar{x} = 4.06$), as indicated in Table 35.

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Instructing Employees With
Length of Employment

According to the main effect from Table 33, Table 36 indicated that those employed for one year or less understood their manager more completely when he gave them instructions ($\bar{x} = 4.5$) than those employed for longer lengths of time ($\bar{x} = 4.32$).

Managerial Communication Effectiveness
When Instructing Employees With Store
Size and Length of Employment

Table 37 describes a main effect from Table 33. This table indicates that employees in the small department store, employed for one year or less, felt they understood their manager when he gave them instructions ($\bar{x} = 4.33$), those employed for longer than one year expressed less understanding ($\bar{x} = 2.94$).

TABLE 36

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN INSTRUCTING EMPLOYEES WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT *

Length of Employment	Manager Communication Effectiveness	
	Mean Score	Count
1 day to 1 year	4.50 _a	36
Over 1 year	4.32 _b	57

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

TABLE 37

MEAN COMPARISONS ON MANAGER COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS
WHEN INSTRUCTING EMPLOYEES WITH LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT
WITH STORE SIZE *

Store Size	Length of Employment			
	1 day to 1 year		Over 1 year	
	Mean	Count	Mean	Count
Large	4.93 _{ab}	14	4.97 _a	31
Medium	4.15 _c	13	4.50 _{bc}	10
Small	4.33 _c	9	2.94 _d	16

*Means with common subscripts are not significantly different. (critical difference = .44)

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Preceding chapters have reviewed available literature on downward communication in organizations and have discussed the methodology and results of this research study. This chapter will discuss the findings of the research undertaken and will analyze the various implications of such findings.

Administration of a questionnaire to employees in three different sized retail department stores provided the data for this study.

Results of this study reported employee attitudes toward communication satisfaction, employee communication preferences and employee perceptions of communication effectiveness as related to store size, age of employee, and length of employment. Employee responses revealed that the primary communication channels utilized in retail department stores are store meetings (54%) and personal communication (46%). This finding is in agreement with previous research studies.

The findings of this research indicate that store size does significantly affect employee communication

satisfaction. Employees in the large store responded more positively toward the five communication satisfaction variables, numbers two through six on the questionnaire, than did the small department store employees. Those employed in the large store feel their manager talks on their level ($\bar{x} = 4.0$), whereas those in the small department store responded less positively ($\bar{x} = 3.08$). Also of interest in regard to speech level is that those who have been employed in the large store for over one year express more satisfaction with their manager's speech level ($\bar{x} = 4.20$) than did those employed one year or less ($\bar{x} = 3.60$). This relationship was reversed for small store employees, with those employed for one year or less feeling their manager does talk on their level ($\bar{x} = 4.33$) and those employed longer disagreeing ($\bar{x} = 2.32$). Throughout, the employee satisfaction variables results indicate that employees in the large department store are more satisfied with the internal communication than are the small store employees. Of particular interest is that employee communication satisfaction is highest among employees in the large department store who have been employed over one year and small store employees who have worked in the store for less than one year. Employee communication satisfaction was directly correlated to length of employment and store size. The five communication satisfaction variables

researched indicate that those employed in the large store for over one year are satisfied with their manager's communication as are those in the small store who were employed for less than one year. Perhaps cultural and community expectations account for the total mirror effect when analyzing communication satisfaction and store size. It was also learned that the age of the employee correlated to store size did affect employee communication satisfaction. Employees in the large store, employed for one year or less, who were sixteen to twenty-six years of age felt there was a need for more communication ($\bar{x} = 4.2$), yet the older employees did not feel they needed more time with their manager ($\bar{x} = 2.0$). As previously examined, the mirror effect once again exists in the small store where younger employees do not need more communication time with their manager ($\bar{x} = 2.0$) and older employees do ($\bar{x} = 3.0$). Sociological norms which are more strictly followed in the small community and store seem to dominate and control, particularly with the older employees, the communication satisfaction variable.

The third finding of this study was a significant correlation between store size and employees perceptions of managerial communication effectiveness. Employees in the large store felt they comprehended their manager's instructions ($\bar{x} = 4.76$), those in the small store felt less

positive about the issue ($\bar{x} = 3.88$). Employees in the small store who have been employed one year or less feel they understand their manager when he corrects them ($\bar{x} = 4.67$) as opposed by those employed over one year ($\bar{x} = 3.44$). All five of the variables measuring employee perceptions of communication effectiveness indicate that large store employees feel managerial communication is effective, whereas small store employees felt less positive or negative toward this variable. Of particular interest is the correlation between perceived communication effectiveness, employee age, and length of employment. Employees twenty-seven years of age and older who have worked in the department store one year or less felt they understood their manager completely while in store meetings ($\bar{x} = 5.0$), yet those employed longer than one year responded less positively ($\bar{x} = 4.35$) toward this variable. Internal defense mechanisms may contribute to the overwhelming agreement of the older employees reaction to their manager's effective communication in store meetings. Perhaps insecurity resulting from their age, yet vulnerability in the new job position, has caused them to respond from a defensive, overbearing standpoint.

Consistently throughout this study came positive employee response from large store employees indicating communication and feelings of effective managerial

communication. On the contrary, employees within the small department store indicated less satisfaction or dissatisfaction with managerial communication.

Previous research has indicated that managerial training may be a factor in employee communication satisfaction. This writer decided to further investigate the managerial backgrounds of those included in this study to determine possible variations in training which could affect employee attitudes. The large store manager had worked in retailing for thirty-five years and was fifty five years of age. He obtained junior status in college and did not go through the store's training program due to his prior retail experience. The manager from the medium size store was twenty-nine years of age and was eight hours from completing his college degree when he entered the company's three year management training program. The Franklin store manager is twenty-seven years old, has no college experience, and completed the company's training program. He has been manager of this store approximately nine months longer than the other two store managers had managed their stores.

Management training differences obviously may have affected the outcome of this study. Perhaps the assumption can be made that managers in the smaller department stores are less qualified and experienced in successful managerial

responsibilities. If this assumption is true, any similar studies would also reveal significant differences in employee communication satisfaction and store size. The question now arises as to whether communication satisfaction was affected by store size or managerial training and expertise.

Cultural expectations present among employees may have affected their communication expectations. Employees from an urban area may be satisfied with less communication in their store due to the impersonal large city norms. Employees from rural areas may expect more communication due to the availability of local information and the close community ties.

Store size itself may have controlled these results. It must be noted that large store managers do have more opportunity to delegate authority among employees and thus have more time to devote to interpersonal communication than does smaller store management.

Limitations

The present study is subject to two notable limitations. First, the sample size was limited. More effective results would have been afforded had more department stores been utilized in this study. A much larger sample would have produced a more accurate representation of the

total population. This study is therefore limited in generalizing only to those employees within three department stores who responded to the questionnaire.

A second limitation of this study is the possibility of cultural differences existing between the three different cities from which the sample was chosen. A solution to this limitation is not available due to the store size demands placed upon the study.

Considerations For Future Research

Considering the discussion, implications and limitations of the study, direction for future researchers is clear. More consideration must be given to conducting experimentation that investigates variables which affect employee communication satisfaction within organizations, particularly retail department stores. This study has refuted prior assumptions related to size of company and communication satisfaction. This research indicates that communication satisfaction is lowest in the small store. Additional research needs to be conducted to determine additional variables affecting communication satisfaction in organizations. By surveying retail department stores nationwide more accurate results and predictable procedures may be proposed.

Conclusion

This study indicates that communication satisfaction is directly affected by department store size. What is significant in this study is that communication satisfaction is greatest in the largest department store tested and least acceptable in the smallest store tested. Management training, cultural and sociological expectations may contribute to employee perceptions of communication satisfaction. All of these implications are not yet understood, but the present study has revealed areas for further research that should be investigated in the future.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Check as MANY as pertain.

1. My manager uses which of the following means of communicating company policy/procedures to me.

_____ store meetings
_____ personal conversation with me
_____ memos/letters
_____ bulletin board
_____ telephone conversations
_____ P.A. system
_____ other _____ what?

Check the answer which best reflects your feelings.

2. My manager talks on my level.

_____ (5) Strongly Agree
_____ (4) Agree
_____ (3) Neutral
_____ (2) Disagree
_____ (1) Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that my manager communicates to me enough.

_____ (5) Strongly Agree
_____ (4) Agree
_____ (3) Neutral
_____ (2) Disagree
_____ (1) Strongly Disagree

4. My manager tells me the things which I need to know in order to do my job well.

(5) Strongly Agree
(4) Agree
(3) Neutral
(2) Disagree
(1) Strongly Disagree

5. I am happy with the amount of information I receive from my manager.

(5) Strongly Agree
(4) Agree
(3) Neutral
(2) Disagree
(1) Strongly Disagree

6. I would like to have more time to talk with my manager.

(5) Strongly Agree
(4) Agree
(3) Neutral
(2) Disagree
(1) Strongly Disagree

Check the ONE answer which fits
your attitudes best.

7. I wish my manager would make use of more:

(6) store meetings
(5) P.A. system messages
(4) conversations with employees
(3) memos/letters
(2) telephone conversations with employees
(1) bulletin board messages

8. If given the choice I would rather learn of company policy/procedure through:
- ☐ (6) store meetings
 - ☐ (5) P.A. system
 - ☐ (4) conversation with manager
 - ☐ (3) memos/letters
 - ☐ (2) telephone conversation with manager
 - ☐ (1) bulletin board
9. When expressing company procedure, my manager's communication causes me to:
- ☐ (5) understand completely
 - ☐ (4) understand partially
 - ☐ (3) have further questions
 - ☐ (2) be slightly confused
 - ☐ (1) not understand at all
10. When correcting employees, my manager's communication causes me to:
- ☐ (5) understand completely
 - ☐ (4) understand partially
 - ☐ (3) have further questions
 - ☐ (2) be slightly confused
 - ☐ (1) not understand at all
11. When conducting store meetings, my manager's communication causes me to:
- ☐ (5) understand completely
 - ☐ (4) understand partially
 - ☐ (3) have further questions
 - ☐ (2) be slightly confused
 - ☐ (1) not understand at all
12. When instructing employees, my manager's communication causes me to:
- ☐ (5) understand completely
 - ☐ (4) understand partially
 - ☐ (3) have further questions
 - ☐ (2) be slightly confused
 - ☐ (1) not understand at all

13. When sending memos/letters, my manager's communication causes me to:

☐ (5) understand completely
☐ (4) understand partially
☐ (3) have further questions
☐ (2) be slightly confused
☐ (1) not understand at all

Check the answer which applies.

14. My age is:

☐ (5) 16-20 years
☐ (4) 21-26 years
☐ (3) 27-35 years
☐ (2) 36-40 years
☐ (1) 41 years and up

15. My educational level is:

☐ (8) business college graduate
☐ (7) below high school level
☐ (6) high school dropout
☐ (5) currently in high school
☐ (4) high school graduate
☐ (3) currently in college
☐ (2) college graduate
☐ (1) graduate student

16. I am a:

☐ (1) male
☐ (2) female

17. I have worked with this company for:

☐ (1) 1 day to 6 months
☐ (2) 6 months to 1 year
☐ (3) 1 year to 2 years
☐ (4) 2 years to 3 years
☐ (5) 3 years to 5 years
☐ (6) 5 years or more

18. I am employed in the store at:

- (1) Nashville
- (2) Bowling Green
- (3) Franklin

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